

Well, that is my paradox. I know next to nothing about genetics and this may be all too apparent to readers; they will then at least have the fun of picking holes in my theory. If, on the other hand, this idea is worth development, that will be the task of someone better qualified than I am.

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BLEDIUS SPP. (COL.: STAPHYLINIDAE) AT LIGHT IN THE LONDON SUBURBS; AND A POINT OF NOMENCLATURE. — Most unexpectedly, two species of this interesting genus of burrowing rove-beetles in 1983 visited my m.v. lamp here at Charlton, specimens occurring on two successive nights in June but at no other time. They were: *B. germanicus* Wagn. (= *limicola* Tott.), one on the 21st and three on the next night; and *B. arenarius* Payk., one on the 22nd. All were females. Both are more or less maritime like most of the genus, and cannot have bred locally; even in the days when saline or brackish marshes extended up the Thames farther than they do now, I find no evidence that either species occurred in the metropolitan area. I have in past years taken *B. germanicus* in the Thames estuary area (Allhallows and Stoke Marshes), but *B. arenarius* never before in W. Kent. The only possible explanation would appear to be a migratory flight from some remnant of saltmarsh on either bank of the river at least seven miles to the east, but the arrival of several individuals at the same spot does seem extraordinary.

I deliberately follow Freude, Harde & Lohse (1964, *Käfer Mitt.*, 4: 98) in calling the smaller of the above two species not *fergussoni* Joy but *arenarius* Payk. — by which name it has been known for well over a century — as a gesture of protest against the use of a name in a sense flatly contrary to that intended by its author. I invite the assent of entomologists to the broad general proposition that a name ought to be applied to an insect possessing the characters attributed to it by the describer, and not to one which he expressly or implicitly excluded from his application of the name, except where there are really sound reasons against such a course. Now, the entire *raison d'être* of Joy's varietal name *fergussoni* was to denote a local race of Paykull's *B. arenarius* having largely dark instead of the typical largely pale elytra; by what right, therefore, is Joy's clearly expressed intention henceforth to be flouted by including in the definition of his name the typical *arenarius*? Such a glaring violation of the above commonsense principle, for the sake of a mere legalistic technicality concerning homonyms, is but one more proof on top of others that the rules of nomenclature as we have them to-day are producing some perverse and unacceptable consequences and urgently require modification. (It should be noted that this has nothing to do with the question of whether the var. *fergussoni* is worth retaining as a separate entity, on which I express no opinion.) — A. A. ALLEN.